

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT (PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference RSJO7380WO	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/GB 03/01434	International filing date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 02.04.2003	Priority date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 03.04.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC G06F17/30		
Applicant BIOWISDOM LIMITED		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☐ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

I ☒ Basis of the opinion

II ☐ Priority

III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability



IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention

V ☒ Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

VI ☐ Certain documents cited

VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application

VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 28.10.2003	Date of completion of this report 10.02.2004
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016	Authorized Officer Correia Martins, F Telephone No. +31 70 340-1042 <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. **PCT/GB 03/01434**

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17))*):

Description, Pages

1-15 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-27 as originally filed

Drawings, Sheets

1/2, 2/2 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
☐ the claims, Nos.:
☐ the drawings, sheets:

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
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5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-27
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-27
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-27
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB03/01434

Re Item V

Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: WO0079436

D2: US2002/0038308,

2. The closest prior art is document D1, which discloses a meta search engine with query expansion based on a knowledge base and on user profile information, specifically using older user queries. The system in D1 further issues a set of possibly different search statements to different search engines.

The search engine from D1 is a database in the sense of the application, as it includes data and can accept search statements (pag. 16, lines 15-22). The knowledge base of D1 (page 6, lines 4-11) is a search database used to provide groups of related search terms.

3. The invention as claimed in claims 1 and 23, differs from D1 in that the claims propose to use a search database in which "each term is present within one or more of the information databases" and, furthermore, it relies on a meta-index ("data repository") which references all the records in all the databases. The invention uses this meta-index to answer locally to the requests, rather than possibly forwarding different requests to the several databases.

The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore new, Art. 33(2) PCT.

4. The problem to be solved by the new features is therefore how to improve the recall rate of the user query.

D1 does not propose this solution to the noted problem, either alone or in combination with any prior knowledge. D1 merely relies on a standard knowledge base, a common approach, augmented with a history of user requests. The fact that D1 does not maintain its own meta-index also steers the person skilled in the art from the use of related terms in the remote databases.

Although the prior art document D2, US2002/0038308, shows a system in which a global database dictionary is used to identify related fields named differently in different databases, it does not allow or suggest the possibility to establish relations (groups of terms) between the specific data in the fields.

Thus, the subject-matter of claim 1 also involves an inventive step, Art. 33(3) PCT.

5. Independent claims 21 and 23 correspond to claim 1 with categories of Computer Program and a System and therefore also meet the requirements of Art. 33(2) and 33(3) PCT.

6. Claims 2-20, 22, 24-27 are dependent on claims 1, 21 and 23 and therefore also meet the requirements of Art. 33(2) and 33(3) PCT.